

FRESNO, CA - Today, Congressman Jim Costa (CA-20) led the effort to help relocate the Hanford Post Office. Representative Costa sent a letter to the District Manager of the United States Postal Service in the hopes that he could communicate the need for a bigger facility to accommodate the city's growth. A city's post office must be able to expand as the city expands; unfortunately Hanford has grown and the Post Office has not been able to increase services accordingly.

The text of the letter follows.

Dear District Manager Tovar,

Ms. Virginia Tovar

District Manager of Van Nuys District

United States Postal Service

28201 Frankin Parkway

Santa Clarita, CA 91354-9991

Dear District Manager Tovar,

I write today to express my strong support for the relocation of the Hanford Post Office.

As a member of the Congress, I strive everyday to improve our communities for the people of the San Joaquin Valley. As you know, a city's post office plays a central role in the community, affecting the everyday lives of its residents. This is the case in the growing city of Hanford, California, located in the Congressional District that I am proud to represent. Unfortunately, the size, location and safety risks of Hanford's current Post Office fail to adequately serve our population.

Four decades have passed since the Hanford Post Office was built to serve 12,000 people and 5 routes. Since then, the population has reached 50,000 and the Hanford Post Office has expanded to serve 32 routes. Strapped for space, the facility was forced to lease an extra parking lot in order to accommodate the increased patronage. In addition, the facility presents a major health risk - the flooring contains asbestos, a hazardous material that can cause lung cancer, threatening the employees and customers. The cost of tile removal is estimated to be \$90,000.

The conditions of the current Post Office are already dire. With a population growth rate of 5 percent, I fear the situation is only further doomed. In light of increasing population and serious health risks, it is clear to me that the Post Office of 1961 can no longer best serve our community in the 21st century.

Hanford's municipal, state, and federal elected officials, downtown organizations, business groups and citizens have joined together with a solution. In order to best benefit the USPS and the residents of Hanford, we propose relocating the Post Office to the former Sears building which now sits empty in the very heart of Hanford. With adequate space, an ideal location and the owners behind our mission, we hope to move the Post Office to this new location.

The relocation of the Hanford Post Office offers a long-term positive impact on our community. Residents will benefit from a more convenient and less crowded post office. The USPS will see enhanced productivity in a prime location to conduct business, more customer

traffic and a healthy spacious work place for employees. And finally the community will gain an important contribution to the vitality of downtown Hanford. Over the past four decades, the city of Hanford has made a concerted and successful effort to enhance its downtown and the relocation of the Hanford Post Office represents an important step in that ongoing revitalization project.□

Thank you for your careful consideration on this important matter. I invite you to participate in a meeting with myself and other local leaders in order to outline a course of action on how to proceed with the relocation of the Hanford Post Office. Please contact me or my staff member Cheryl Lehn at (559) 495-1620 to organize this meeting. It is my hope that you join me in my efforts to improve the Central Valley.

Sincerely,

Jim Costa

Member of Congress